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SENATE MEMORIAL 63

**49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

INTRODUCED BY

Linda M. Lopez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE BERNALILLO COUNTY METROPOLITAN DETENTION CENTER  
TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND SERVICE.

WHEREAS, the Bernalillo county metropolitan detention center is a state-of-the-art center that opened in December 2002 and is currently capable of housing two thousand two hundred thirty-six inmates and alleged offenders; and

WHEREAS, the detention center utilizes a modern pod design that enhances efficiency and effectiveness by permitting direct visual and physical access to, and supervision of, all inmates and alleged offenders; and

WHEREAS, the center is equipped with advanced technological video surveillance to further enhance awareness of the movement of inmates and alleged offenders, thereby reducing the opportunity for contraband to be brought into the

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1 center; and

2 WHEREAS, the center is staffed with more than three  
3 hundred highly trained correctional officers, all of whom are  
4 expected to have high-level leadership and communication  
5 skills; and

6 WHEREAS, the center has an interest in promoting good  
7 relations with the families of inmates and alleged offenders,  
8 as demonstrated by a Christmas celebration held in December  
9 2008, at which eight hundred seventy-five children of inmates  
10 and alleged offenders received gifts; and

11 WHEREAS, the mission of the Bernalillo county metropolitan  
12 detention center is "to protect the public and provide a safe  
13 and secure environment for both inmates and alleged offenders  
14 and staff under the principles of direct supervision and in  
15 accordance with American correctional association standards";  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, although the security and protection of the  
18 public is considered to be the primary focus of its mission,  
19 the center believes that ensuring quality operations and inmate  
20 services in a fiscally sound manner is essential; and

21 WHEREAS, one aspect of quality operations is providing  
22 safe and easily navigable access to inmates and alleged  
23 offenders by family members who wish to visit an inmate or who  
24 are seeking the release of an alleged offender; and

25 WHEREAS, visitors to the center certainly include the

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1 friends and family members of the inmates and alleged  
2 offenders; and

3 WHEREAS, although visiting hours are posted on the  
4 center's web site, navigating a system that is primarily  
5 designed for the incarceration of inmates and alleged offenders  
6 can be confusing; and

7 WHEREAS, visiting an inmate can be an emotionally trying  
8 and upsetting situation, one that would benefit from a clear  
9 and accessible process and from personnel available to support  
10 and assist visitors; and

11 WHEREAS, having a family member arrested is a traumatic  
12 event for all concerned, and family members have a need to know  
13 the rights and responsibilities of the alleged offender, the  
14 process for seeking the release of that offender and how long  
15 such a process is expected to take; and

16 WHEREAS, in all situations, the friends and family members  
17 of inmates and alleged offenders are entitled to courteous,  
18 helpful and timely attention from the staff of the Bernalillo  
19 county metropolitan detention center;

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
21 OF NEW MEXICO that the Bernalillo county metropolitan detention  
22 center be requested to develop a plan to improve access and  
23 service; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
25 transmitted to the director of the Bernalillo county

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1 metropolitan detention center.

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